

Planning application number: 22/0902/FUL

Site address

The Stag Brewery Lower Richmond Road Mortlake London SW14 7ET ([View Site Plan](#))

Details

Proposal

Erection of a three-storey building to provide a new secondary school with sixth form; sports pitch with floodlighting, external MUGA and play space; and associated external works including landscaping, car and cycle parking, new access routes and other associated works

Response

Objection

The proposal to build a 1200-pupil secondary school is inspired by the LBRuT Council (not the Developer) and seems to be driven by an opportunity to draw on central government funding for the purpose. The population figures in our area do not support the need for a secondary school and moreover the Council's initiative is based on inaccurate and flawed figures for the number of children to be educated in future years.

It would:

- Substantially increase traffic in a constricted area
- Draw out-of-borough pupils into this already congested neighbourhood
- Threaten the viability of existing sixth forms at both Richmond Park Academy and All Saints
- Rely on insufficient and inappropriate sporting area for a school of 1200 pupils

It is concerning that a few people in North Barnes have recently been unable to get into either of the above named Secondary schools already functioning in our area. The effected pupils have had to seek schooling over the river in Hammersmith because of geographic location. This anomaly could be resolved under the Nobel rules with sufficient support from the Council. This is important because families in North Barnes are often recent immigrants and are less able to fend for themselves in matters of school choice.

However, the introduction of a third secondary school at Mortlake will prejudice the ability of the existing two local secondary schools to run economically viable 6th forms. If the Council believe that these schools are incapable of delivering the quality of education, to

which local families are entitled, the solution would be to fix the problems rather than hoping that a new school will solve the issues.

The physical location of the school will add pressure to the already inadequate transport services via bus on the A3003 or train to Mortlake station and this has three obvious consequences:

- Loss of the grass playing field designated Other Open Land of Townscape Importance (OOLTI) to accommodate the school buildings and artificial surfaces in the limited remaining space
- Heightened pollution from traffic ferrying children to and from school
- Greater risk of injuries or death on Lane Sheen railway crossing for children using Mortlake station
- Reduced opportunity as part of the redevelopment to provide a Medical Centre and much needed Social Housing for disadvantaged members of the community. A Primary School as envisioned in the 2011 Local Plan for the Brewery Site would enable such social amenities to be provided on the upper floors.

From the very first exhibition by Reselton at the Brewery Site I have been asking where the pupils will be able to learn field sports and how they would be safely transported both to and from suitable facilities in the area. There has never been a satisfactory answer. My calculations are that the proposed sports facilities at the school would only provision a child to play on the Astroturf pitch for one two-period class every two to three weeks. It is an unrealistic period of time to maintain fitness never mind develop the skills necessary to play successfully.

Moreover, the loss of a real grass pitches with rough areas on the perimeter will also disadvantage wildlife previously using the open space to transit between the river and local gardens. There is no space for an orchard or gardening plots to encourage children interested in horticulture.

In summary a Secondary school on this site cannot be justified by a growing population and it fails to deliver the rounded education because the sporting facilities are so poor. Damage to senior teaching provision at the other two Secondary schools in the area would disadvantage existing educational quality offered to children in the area. This would result in the necessity for more children to travel and so add to pollution, not to mention the living costs for local families.

William Mortimer